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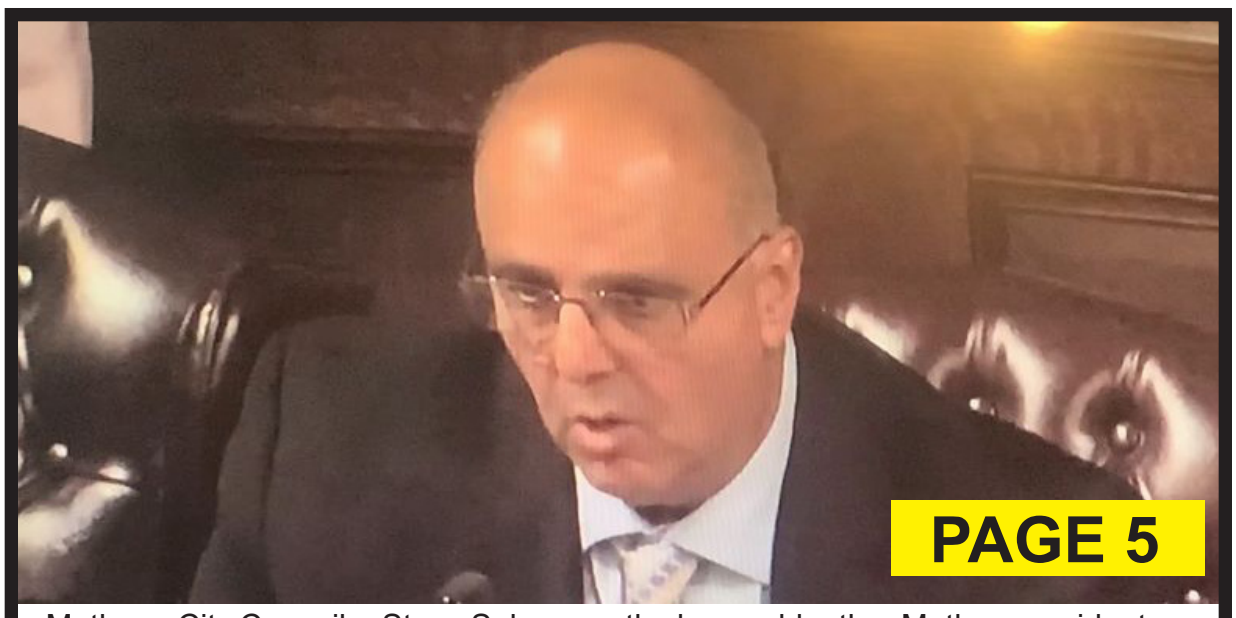

Methuen City Councilor Steve Saba says the he would rather Methuen residents go hungry than get donated food deliveries from a taxi company he is mad.

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VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

Married on the 4th of July - Celebrating 75 years of Marriage!

John Cuddy
VALLEY PATRIOT HERO REPORTER

Dracut's Bob and Jeanette (Jenny) Iby, celebrated their 75th Wedding Anniversary on July 4, 2021. Married on July 4, 1946, after Bob finished his tour with the US Army Air Corp, as a Bombardier on a B-17 Flying Fortress. The couple attended high school together in Burlington, VT, and corresponded regularly throughout World War II. Bob's parents moved to Dracut, and after the war, he took the train back to Vermont nearly every weekend to visit her. At the urging of his father, he proposed.

Both of their families have an extensive legacy of Military Service. Bob's dad, Guy Iby, was a World War I Infantryman, wounded in the trenches of France. Both of Bob's brothers served, older brother Richard was badly injured teaching hand to hand combat training, with the US Army during World War II, and died of his injuries a short time later. Younger brother Wendell served in the Korean War with the US Army. Jenny's brother Robert, also served during the Second World War with the US Army Air Corp. Two of the couple's six children, their son Jack and their daughter Paula, served in the US Air Force during the Vietnam War. Their granddaughter Holly also served in the US Air Force.

Bob told me today of the lifetime bond he formed with his crewmates, he stated that from date of enlistment, to first mission, for a B-17 Bomber crew, it took the US Army Air Corp around 24 months to completely train a crew. As the Bombardier, he had two basic jobs, supervise the loading and arming of the bombs, and once over a target, taking control over the aircraft, "piloting it" to the target using the bomb sight. World War II ended before he could fly his first combat mission.

After leaving the service, Bob worked thirty-seven and a half years at General Electric in Lowell. He served in the newly formed US Air Force Reserves until 1950. After the war, Bob learned to fly at the now closed Dracut Airport, and he and Jenny would fly to Burlington, Vermont on Sunday afternoons to have dinner with her parents. Jenny, the mother of six children, told me she was very proud of her career choice of being a full-time mother. Bob used to leave GE during his lunch just to spend 15 minutes with his family.

The couple raised their six children first living in Lowell, then in 1967, the family moved to Dracut. Their children include Paula, Jack and Jill, who are twins, Robin, Bob, and Eric. While trying to learn more about Bob and Jenny, the conversation drifted to the accomplishments of their children and grandchildren. Bob and Jenny

HERO: PAGE 14

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Methuen Discourages Participation in Local Elections

For years we have called the public's attention to the way Methuen elections are structured to subvert democracy and keep political insiders in power. This year's upcoming municipal elections are a perfect example of how this system discourages voter participation in elections and needs to change.

First, Methuen has a deadline for potential candidates to get nomination papers from city hall. That deadline is in the dead of summer when most average people are on vacation and not thinking at all about the upcoming November election for mayor, city council, or school committee. Other towns don't have this, voters can take out nomination papers up to the day of the deadline to turn them in for certification.

In Methuen, if you don't take out nomination papers by the mid-summer date, you can't run for office in Methuen. Period.

Secondly, Methuen has what we call "the incumbent protection act" where they cancel primary elections if there aren't enough candidates to eliminate for the November final.

But, eliminating candidates is not the only reason to hold primaries. They also provide a vehicle for more candidates to participate. In other communities, if residents don't like the slate of candidates who have taken out papers, they can run a write-in campaign on the primary ballot. If they get at least 50 write-in votes (more in some cities) their name will appear on the November ballot. This means incumbents who thought they were going to run unopposed, now have to raise and spend money, knock on doors, and actually talk to voters to retain power in office.

But, since Methuen cancels primaries when there aren't enough candidates to "eliminate" there is no mechanism for voters to upset the political insiders with a write in campaign. We have long argued that this system was specifically designed to stop voters from participating in local elections. It 100% ensures that more incumbents will remain in office.

Given how adamant Methuen voters have been about imposing term limits to stop the insiders from holding power too long, it's more than strange that they blindly accept election rules which specifically eliminate competition.

This year, the mayor, school committee, and four incumbent City Councilors are running unopposed and there is no way to get them out.

If this was Lawrence, Haverhill, or even North Andover, any voter could mount a last-minute write-in or sticker campaign challenge to unseat at least one of those officials. At the very least it makes them campaign to keep their job. But, not in Methuen.

This year, Mayor Perry, Councilors Ziegler, Saba, McCarty, and Faretra as well as the school committee, have already been elected. It's now impossible for them to lose in November.

That's like not having an election at all.

This needs to change and it's clear that the current insiders have no interest in changing it. That means the voters need to force their hand. It's up to the people of Methuen to put a stop to all of this and start a citizen petition.

Are there no real leaders in Methuen willing to step up to the plate?

So far, the answer has been "no". ◊

Pearlstein Ignored Leadership Failures and Faulty Government Systems in Holyoke Nursing Home Tragedy

Linda Dean Campbell
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

In May, a special committee formed by the Massachusetts Legislature released the report on its investigation of the COVID-19 outbreak at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home that resulted in 77 deaths. The report by the Special Joint Oversight Committee, which we chair, is most notable for taking the opposite approach of an investigation conducted by Mark Pearlstein and commissioned by Governor Charlie Baker.

We acknowledge that important questions have been raised regarding the independence and depth of the Pearlstein investigation and report. Our committee's investigation and report focus on the underlying governance failures that created a perfect storm for the preventable tragedy that occurred at the Soldiers' Home.

The Pearlstein report provided a good chronological picture of what happened in those fateful few days when the two locked dementia units at the Soldiers' Home were combined and suspected COVID-19 patients and likely non-COVID-19 patients were placed side by side only a few feet from each other.

Pearlstein voluntarily testified before our committee, and his testimony and report corroborated the courageous testimony of family and staff at our hearings conducted in Holyoke. Their testimony described horrific scenes where the COVID outbreak was ineffectually managed and some veterans died without proper medication to ease their passing -- while others died completely alone. Many family members and staff will never recover from the trauma of what they witnessed and experienced.

Yet Pearlstein's report was only a launching point for our investigation, and indeed, committee members concluded that his report raised more questions than answers. He corroborated the "how" of those fateful few days, whereas we asked, "Why?"

The legislative report lays bare in excruciating detail the many points of failure that existed within the Baker administration's oversight of the Soldiers' Home well before the coronavirus pandemic struck.

Beyond describing these points of failure, the special committee's report makes recommendations to address them. Legislation to carry out these recommendations is currently being drafted. A few examples of some of the findings and recommendations included in this report are:

1. Bennett Walsh was not qualified to serve as superintendent of the Holyoke Soldiers' Home, and furthermore, continued to serve after his leadership failures and unsuitability for the position were clearly identified, well before tragedy struck.

Information provided to the committee (including testimony received by former secretary of veterans' services Francisco Ureña) clearly spells out that the process for the selection of Walsh was haphazard at best. Report recommendations include, among others:

• Requiring that future superintendents be licensed nursing home administrators, as is required for all other facilities in Massachusetts.

• Requiring that both the Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes be enrolled in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services as participating facilities subject to all requirements and inspection protocols.

• Putting in place a professional nomination process where candidates for superintendent are reviewed by the proposed secretary of veterans affairs and the secretary of health and human services.

• Creating a system of accountability where the governor appoints (and removes if necessary) a superintendent and deputy superintendent from a pool of qualified and recommended candidates.

• Establishing a similar clear and professional process for selecting other positions within the Soldiers' Homes and annually evaluating personnel performance.

2. A muddled and ineffectual chain of command hindered the response to the crisis and the management of the Holyoke Soldiers' Home well before COVID-19 emerged.

Clear and effective communication between the Soldiers' Home and the governor's office was nonexistent during the crisis. The report documents this in meticulous detail, including testimony provided by staff and former veterans' services secretary Ureña. The report explores the lack of accountability that was spread between boards, secretariats, and staff. There were no direct and clear lines of authority, accountability, and

PEARLSTEIN: PAGE 11

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More People Would Get Vaccine if Not for All The Lies!

If you're looking for someone to blame for all the unvaccinated deaths in this country, look no further than the "news" media and government officials.

Despite the fact that the vast majority of the "news" media continues to blame Donald Trump and his supporters for refusing to take the vaccine - the fact is, 60% of the people who have yet to get vaccinated are Black and Latino Americans. I'm pretty sure they are not taking their marching orders from Donald Trump.

Maybe they are refusing to take the vaccine because they remember the entire CNN "news" crew, Joe Biden, and Kamala Harris condemning the vaccine while Trump was in office, explicitly telling the public it was not safe.

Of course, now that the Democrats are in full control of Washington D.C. their tune has changed.

From day one, you have been lied to so much about this pandemic that a large number of people have no faith in medical "experts" media "experts" or political "leaders". The have all, in unison, made matter-of-fact declarations about this virus, only to flip-flop to the exact opposite position as if what they said the day before never even happened.

Here are just some of the lies you've been told so far:

The Covid virus is transmissible from surfaces! Therefore, we must lock down the country.

But, don't worry it's only for 15 days to "flatten the curve".

Make that 30 days.

Did we say 30 days? Well the "science' says maybe 60 days.

Never mind, just stay home until further notice, we'll let you know when you have permission to leave the house.

Make sure you wipe down your mail and your groceries!

Oh wait .... the science changed; you can't get COVID from surfaces.

But NO, we won't reopen the country just yet!

No need to wea

r a mask they do not work.

OK, forget what we said yesterday, they DO work, you should wear one.

Make it TWO masks ... maybe you should wear three!

In fact, masks should be mandatory.

Never, ever take medication not approved by the FDA.

There will never be a vaccine in less than five years.

If the vaccine comes out under Trump don't take it, it isn't safe.

WAIT, we have a vaccine?

You should take this!

No, it's NOT approved by the FDA, but take it anyway.

In Fact, we are going to force some people to take it. Everyone else should take too it so you don't have to wear a mask!

OH, you got the vaccine?

Well, you STILL have to wear a mask!

Why are so many people not taking the vaccine?

It WORKS! It WORKS!

It REALLY WORKS!

Hey look, a new thing – "Breakthrough Cases" - you know, when people who took the vaccine get the virus anyway.

But, don't you dare say it doesn't work or you are spreading "misinformation"!

Children don't need the vaccine because the "science" says kids don't get sick and don't transmit the virus.

OK, forget that part about kids not getting sick, we have to mandate kids be vaccinated.

While we're at it, kids should wear masks at school.

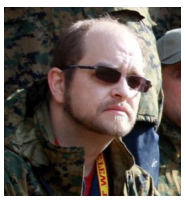
* I could go on and in fact I edited down the list of lies for space reasons, but I could have included 30 more.

The fact is, people refuse to take the vaccine for one reason and one reason only, they've had enough of the shameless dishonesty and political double speak from people claiming to be "experts".

It's time our leaders start telling us the truth - the whole truth. We are adults and we can handle it.

If they continue to lie, more people will refuse to take the vaccine and more people will die.

When that happens the one thing we know for sure is that they will blame Donald Trump, or someone else, anyone but themselves and their own deceitful narratives for the needless loss of life. ◊



Tom Duggan is publisher of The Valley Patriot, the book "Heroes in Our Midst", a former Lawrence School Committee member, and hosts the Paying Attention! Podcast which can be downloaded on iTunes, iHeartRadio, Spotify, and PodBean. You can email your comments to valleypatriot@aol.com.

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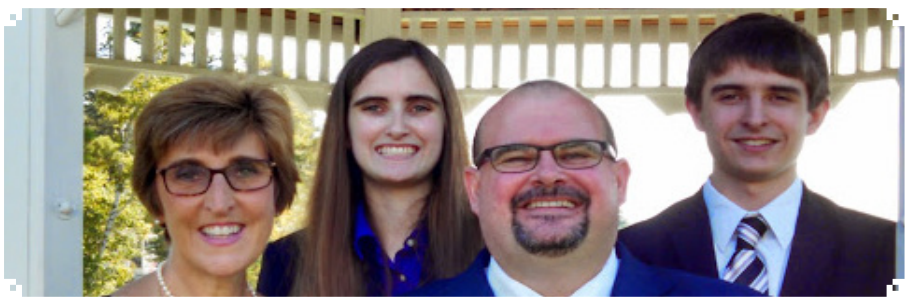
Every day when we walk out the door, there is always the possibility that it may be our "last" time. You wouldn't walk out the door without your wallet; if you fail to plan for your Family's future, that's exactly what you may be doing.



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Reducing the Property Tax Burden on Seniors

Diana DiZoglio
MA STATE SENATOR

Hello Valley Patriot Readers,

As a member of the Legislature's Elder Affairs Committee, one of my top focuses this session is assessing bills filed that impact our older adults. Among these pieces of legislation is an important bill I have co-sponsored, Senate Bill 1823, An Act relative to property tax deferral for estates.

All too many older adults, in the Merrimack Valley and across Massachusetts, face being forced out of their homes due to increasing property values that result in unaffordable tax bills. Seniors who own their homes and are determined to remain in them often struggle to make ends meet as time goes by, faced with a harrowing decision over whether they can afford food, prescription drugs or heat, in addition to a property tax bill.

The Gerontology Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Boston calculates for each U.S. state the Elder Economic Insecurity Rate, which is the percentage of couples and single individuals with income below the level required to cover basic living expenses. The most recent report found that about 60 percent of older single adults in Massachusetts had incomes below the Elder Index target – a ranking of 49th among all 50 states, above only Mississippi. For older adult couples, Massachusetts ranked 41st.

Why does Massachusetts, with one of the highest median incomes in the nation, rank so terribly? The answer is, in large part, the cost of housing and a huge component of this cost is the property tax.

While Massachusetts does provide some relief, through the Circuit Breaker Tax Credit, which is administered at the state level, and the Senior Property Tax Exemption, which is administered by local governments, our older adults sorely need additional resources.

This legislation would reduce the property tax burden on both senior citizens and their heirs. It reforms the payment schedule on the Property Tax Deferral Program to offer a one-year grace period of lower interest rates for a deceased person's family to settle an estate, as well as for veterans and their families. The bill also provides town assessors with greater discretion in granting hardship exemptions to those struggling to keep up with their property taxes.

It is imperative that we do all we can to provide seniors with the resources needed to remain in their homes and maintain economic security.

I wholeheartedly support this bill and am committed to advocating for its passage during the legislative session.

If you have any questions on this or any other piece of legislation, please feel free to contact me anytime via email at Diana.Dizoglio@masenate.gov or phone at 978-984-7747.

Yours in service,

Diana ◊

Councilor Saba Says He Would Rather People Go Hungry

Methuen City Councilor Steve Saba (who is Chairman of the city council) says that he would rather Methuen residents go hungry than to receive food donations delivered bya company he is upset with.

The revelation came during a city council meeting last month when it was revealed that a minority (Latino) owned taxi company had been operating without a license from the city, a company Saba voted to approve without ever asking the status of their city license.

According to Methuen Police Officer Randy Haggar, the taxi company owners had received a business license from the state to operate in Methuen but did not know that they needed a separate business license from the city, so they began to operate.

Haggar says that the police department recognized that there is a language barrier and is working with the company to help them go through that process, but had shut down their operations in the meantime.

That's when Methuen Mayor Neil Perry decided to help them with their loss of revenue by hiring them to deliver donated food to hungry Methuen residents through the Methuen Cares program.

Saba became enraged when he found out that the mayor was using the same company to deliver food to hungry residents still affected by the pandemic and shutdowns.

"I'm Just not comfortable doing that at all, and we have more and more headaches coming from this CARES program right now. I'm getting tired of all this because this falls on us too."

The mayor took no time calling Saba to task.

"Let me respond what you just said Mr. Chair, this doesn't come out of the CARES program this is a separate grant."

"This is the 'Methuen Cares program it's separate. it is not the CARES program."

As Saba continued to object, Perry put the question right to him.

"So, you don't believe in providing food for Methuen residents who need it? Is that what you're saying?"

Saba shockingly said "no".

"I want to do it where they are safe and that the company is licensed, and we know who's walking into people's homes, yeah otherwise I don't! And I don't even want to accept this $45.9M if we're not going to handle it the right way."

The mayor said he was mixing apples and oranges. The CARES program is federal relief for cities and towns to

pay for pandemic related expenses. The Methuen Cares program is donated money used to fill the gaps in what the federal CARES program doesn't cover.

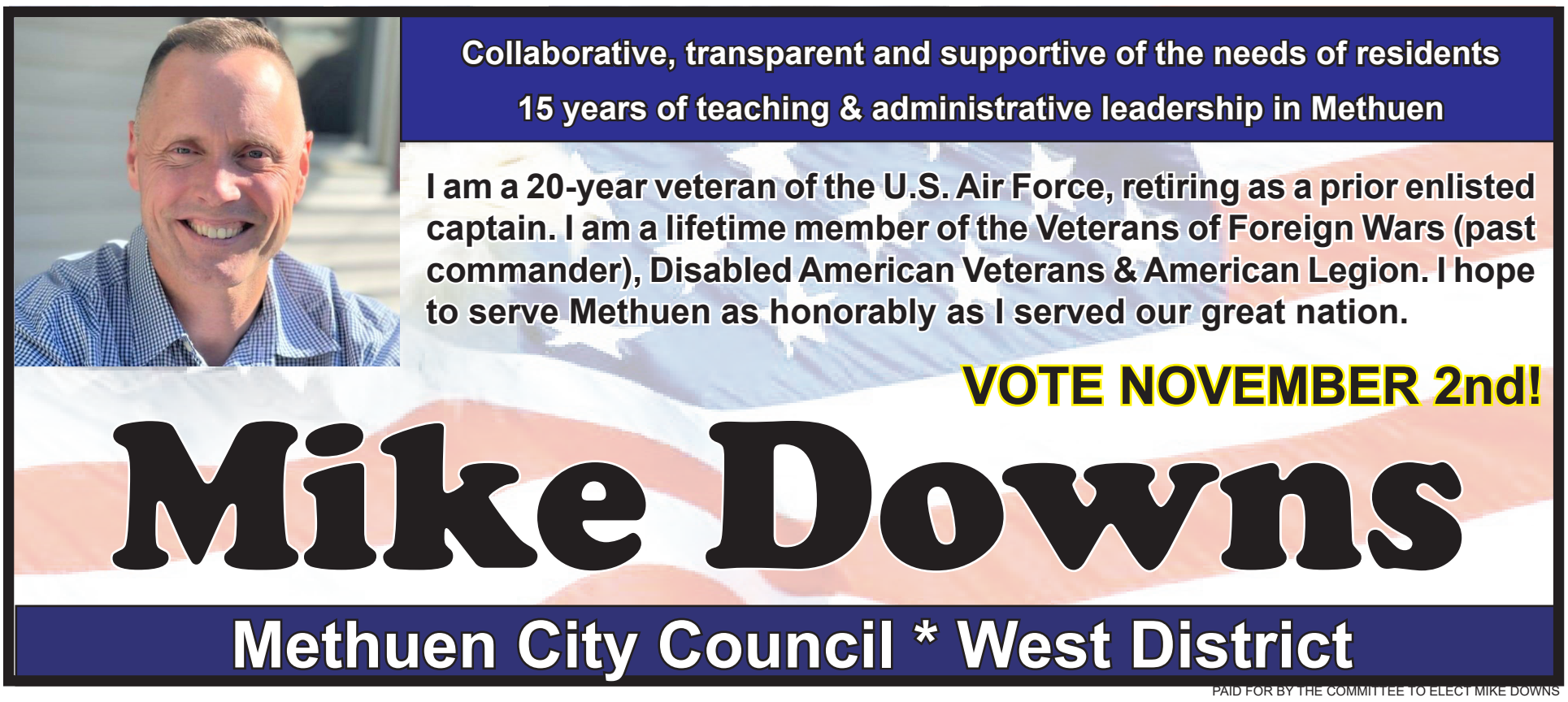
He said the company doesn't need a license to deliver food because they are not acting as a taxi company when they perform such tasks.

That's when Saba admitted to not doing his job when he, himself voted to approve the taxi company operations in Methuen.

"As far as the cab company we all approved it unanimously. That's on all of us, we're just not asking enough questions. We're just not. I'm not."

The Valley Patriot called some of the people who deliver food to Methuen residents through the Methuen CARES program to find out if they were actually going "into people's homes" and were told by several individuals that they usually meet the residents at the door of their homes and give them the donated food without going in.

The mayor says he will continue to feed Methuen residents in need. ◊



Petition to Establish A Special Commission on PTSD

What's Not to Like about Massachusetts House Bill 2091 by Colleen M Garry

KANE
VALLEY PATRIOT MASCOT

Kane knows Representative Colleen Garry. . In fact, she is known by many as a strong supportive advocate of the medical front line workers, veterans, police officers, firefighters, EMS, and other first responders. What does she do that is so unique? Well Kane says she does the most important thing possible; she listens to her constituents. She seeks out the professionals in these stressful fields and brings them to the table. Representative Garry is also very patriotic; he saw her speak at Veterans Memorial Park on a Memorial Day last year.

Under Massachusetts House Bill 2091, a representative of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the Department of Mental health will chair a 17 person team of professionals tasked with updating the advances in research on diagnosis and treatment of PTSD, advances in access to care for individuals with PTSD, coordination of activities and programs that promote education and awareness on Post traumatic stress disorder, research of successful treatments and outcomes for individuals diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as barriers to treatment. and research on the treatment of PTSD associated with the coronavirus and successful treatment and outcome. The Commonwealth shall submit it's recommendations to the Governor and the Clerks of the House of Representatives and Senate annually.

Kane asked who will serve on the Committee? To name a few, agencies will include Secretary of Veteran Affairs, The American Legion, the Veterans Administration, the Department of Children and Families, Boston Children's Hospital, Jane Doe Association, the Massachusetts Police Association, the immigrant refugee association, the Professional Firefighters Association, EMS, and the Massachusetts Nursing Association. Kane thought wow, that will be a lot of knowledgeable people on one committee.

Kane sees the importance of talking openly about post-traumatic stress disorder. Our neighbors that serve as veterans, police officers, firefighters, EMS, and medical personal are knowledgeable of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder since the symptoms are frequently observed during their daily work duties. However, those serving in these high-risk professions are at risk of developing Post Traumatic stress themselves since their profession exposes them to trauma, a culprit in developing Post Traumatic stress.

So why do some people develop post-traumatic stress and others do not, good question thought Kane, but we really do not know. Do these workers feel they can get help for PTSD without repercussions from work, or fear of stigma. Well, that is a loaded question, for many they fear judgement and wonder if they would be deemed less fit for duty than their peers. With a suicide rate at 22 deaths a day in the veteran population, it is obvious as a country we have not figured out how to support our returning veterans. With stigma attached, people continue to feel alone in their struggle. Kane was sad to hear that people didn't feel comfortable asking for help. He usually barks at people or gives them the paw if he needs something.

The watered-down version of the full DSM5 Diagnosis of PTSD, is eloquently defined by the National Center for PTSD as a mental health challenge developed after experiencing or witnessing a life-threatening event such as combat, an accident, natural disaster, assault, or sexual assault to name a few. Symptoms include reliving the event in nightmares, flashbacks, avoiding situations that remind you of the event, negative changes in beliefs, hyperarousal, not feeling you fit in, avoiding social situations, isolation, not feeling connected to loved ones and peers, and the list goes on.

So, what do we do? Kane thought we could start by passing this bill that would bring local awareness and education to our community, it will also bring the professionals to the table putting those who know most in the driver's seat, continue to support the amazing research conducted by the VA, and help people find resources. Many in the state may not know that we are in the middle of a mental health crisis and it has become impossible to find mental health providers for many. Many providers have long waiting lists and residential treatment facilities have been overly full for months.

So, Kane was interested in learning what the most effective treatment practices for post-traumatic stress disorder is. He found helpful research through the National Center for PTSD, U S Department of Veteran Affairs that trauma focused therapy has been deemed as having the most successful outcomes. Modalities that fit that definition include Cognitive Processing Therapy, (understanding how trauma changes our thoughts and feelings), prolonged exposure therapy. (Openly discussing trauma) and EMDR (helping your brain reprocess the trauma memories so it feels more neutral) Kane works in a facility where EMDR is practiced but it is very private, so he usually gets kicked out of the room.

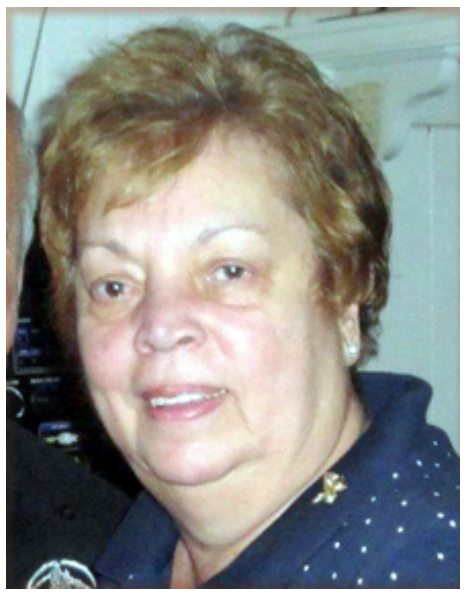
Kane has also attended training on Acceptance Commitment Therapy being used by the Veteran's Association where people notice negative thoughts and judgement that limit their life progress, allow the thoughts without getting overly involved in the content move through their awareness, then move their energy towards their value.

As an example, if Kane's mind told him he shouldn't pass the scary spider Halloween Decoration down the street and he should hide in the house, he would notice he has this fear, but remind himself his value is to get fresh air and socialize with the people in his neighborhood to stay happy He will put his energy in getting outside instead of the content of his fear. Kane wants you to know that his example is small compared to the experience of many people but starting small is the way to go and spider decorations are very scary.

Kane hopes Bill 2091 is passed so knowledgeable people can come together to work on these complex issues that affect so many of our local first responders and members of our community in general. We ask them to take care of us, why wouldn't we support their needs. When Kane came from Tennessee, he was afraid of being alone, going down the stairs, and having cars pass by.

He was able to let people know about his worries so they could help him through the situation. He doesn't want there to be the stigma and judgement to seek treatment when needed. As for passing outside spider decorations-, well that is a work in process but it's ok to talk about with friends. ◊

Joyce Campagnone Seeks to Return to the City Council



METHUEN - Former Methuen City Councilor Joyce Campagnone is the only challenger in the city council At-Large (city wide) race this November.

Campagnone has served on the school committee and the city council several times prior to getting elected to represent the Central District on the council four years ago. Campagnone has been one of the biggest advocates for local veterans, raising money and volunteering for the VFW, the American Legion, and other veterans groups for more than four decades.

Campagnone was not on the city council when the controversial police superior officer's contract was passed in 2017, though she has often taken the blame for that vote.

"I had nothing to do with that, I wasn't even on the council when they approved that contract, but I will tell you I never would have voted for it," Campagnone told The Valley Patriot.

Campagnone called the school committee task in 2018 and 2019 for mismanaging their budget to the tune of $4M and says she doesn't believe all of the $4M was spent on special education as former Superintendent Scannell and School Committee members had publicly claimed.

"They didn't do their jobs, that's all. They had a job, one job, run the school budget - and they didn't do a very good job of it." she said at the time.

Campagnone says that the school should provide a detailed budget to the council, showing line-by-line where the money is being spent. "I asked for that years ago and it still isn't happening. "We did it on the council why can't they do it? We have to have transparency here; this is the people's money."

Campagnone lost reelection two years ago as a Central District City Councilor by about 90 votes. She says she wants to come back to the council to ask the questions not being asked and make sure seniors and veterans have a voice at the table.

Since Methuen officials do not believe in Democracy at the local level there will be no primary election in September.

Campagnone's name will appear on the November ballot in her hopes to unseat one of the three incumbent At-Large Councilors: Nick DiZoglio, D.J. Beauregard, and Jessica Finocchiaro. ◊

North Andover's Hogan Graduates U.S. Merchant Marine Academy

Christina Shea Hogan of North Andover recently graduated from the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) at Kings Point, NY. Hogan earned a Bachelor of Science degree and a commission in the U. S. armed forces. She also earned a Merchant Marine officer license, qualifying her to serve as an officer on any ship in the U.S. flag merchant marine.

The United States Merchant Marine Academy is a federal service academy that educates and graduates licensed Merchant Marine officers. In addition to the rigorous academic and physical requirements for admission, applicants must be nominated by their Congressman or Senator. Hogan was nominated by Congressman Seth Moulton.

All USMMA graduates incur an obligation to serve the United States. The U.S. Flag Merchant Marine – manned exclusively by American mariners – is essential for securing the country's commerce in peacetime and delivering warfighters, weapons, and military supplies in times of conflict. The majority of "Kings Pointers" serve for eight years as Navy reservists in the Strategic Sealift Officer Program while working aboard U.S. flag vessels; others will serve on active duty in our nation's armed forces.

By virtue of their elite training and real-world experience, graduates are ready to go on day one in service of American military strength and economic power. As part of her four year education, Hogan spent one year training as a cadet aboard ocean going vessels. Hogan will fulfill her commitment as a Third Officer in the US Merchant Marine and a US Navy Strategic Sealift Officer.

U.S. Senator Mark Kelly (AZ), a 1986 alumnus of the Academy, gave the commencement address and told the graduates "Your graduation comes at a particularly important inflection point in the United States history. Sea power matters now more than ever. And a big part of that is all of you."

Dedicated during WWII, USMMA has since served the nation in both peace and war. Learn more at www.WeAreTheUSMMA.com

For more information about the Academy, visit https://www.usmma.edu/.

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

Thank you to Kevin Moury and his grandson Keegan Pomerleau. of Sweet Treats soft serve ice cream truck for donating ice cream to the TMF family dinner for the homeless in Lawrence.

**** ON THE INSIDE ****

DPW AUDIT IN METHUEN

During the police audit the city councilors asked in-depth, deatailed questions that often times lasted longer than the answers. The questionning lasted hours as they treated the management audit like an FBI investigation. One councilor even asked if the auditors would be reading through police officer's emails during their audit and investigating their phone logs. They wanted the public to know that they were on top of every detail and every dollar being spent and they let all let us know about it with a series of speeches about how they are the voice of the people!

That was then. Last week the countil discussed the contract for an audit of the DPW and it was a love fest. There were only two questions. No in-depth discussions about overtime, or snooping through city employee emails and phone logs, no interrogation of the department head, and no grandstandding about how they are the guardians of the taxpayer dollars. Maybe this is because a lot of people were paying attention to the police audit and nobody cares about the money being spent in DPW.

DAVE ABDOO HAS LEFT THE BUILDING

After 14 years of serving the people of Lawrence on the city council, District "E" Councilor Dave Abdoo has decided to hang it up. Abdoo ran unseccussfully for mayor in 2009 against Willie Lantugua and has been a steady voice on the council for fiscal responsibility.

KENDRYS VASQUEZ DUCKS OUR CALLS

When my good friend State Rep. Marcos Devers told me he was endorsing Kendrys Vasquez and asked me if I would be willing to do the same, I told him I would contact Kendrys and if he was responsive and asnwered a few basic questions on the record I would absolutely consider doing so. After all, there is very little I will not do for my friend Marcos Devers he is and has been oe of my most lloyal friends for 30 years.

So, even though, I'm not really happy with some of Vasquez's shenanigans lately I reached out Kendrys expecting him to call me back within a day or so.

Unfortunately, Kendrys Vasquez ducked my calls and when I texted him that I was trying to reach him, he responded by saying he would connect with me "at some point". When I told him I was looking to reach him that day, his answer was that he has a team who manages his schedule. I'm not sure why someone needs to "schedule" a five minute phone call to answer a reporter's question, but there you have it. It's one thing to have differences on political issues, but if a candiate running for high office can't be responsive enough to the presss during an eleciton, how responsive do you think he's going to be if he wins? The number one job of an elected official is to be responsive and accessible to the press and the public. If you can't do that right, you really don't belong in elected office.

LEPAGE IN COOPER OUT?

Haverhill city councilor Colin LePage has thrown his hat into the Haverhill mayor's race at just about the time Guy Cooper seems to be backing out of the race.

SNUBBING COUNCILOR FARETRA

Tensions are running high on the Methuen City Council lately and got even higher last week when Council Chairman Steve Saba decided to put together a subcommittee to deal with issues involving the recreation deparment. Saba appinted five councilors to the committee, but snubbed Councilor Faretra and didn't put him on the committee. That's when Councilor McCarty called out Saba saying that the councilor who works most with the recreation department is Faretra and that Faretra should have been appinted to the committee. Saba then said that Faretra never got back to him about the appintment so he appinted someone else. That's when Faretra said the he returned Saba's text message minutes after Saba reached out to him. Saba says Faretra didn't get back to him fast enough so he appointed someone else to the committee. Councilor Beuaregard said he would not accept the appintment so that Faretra can be on teh committee, but Saba said it was his call to appoint a replacement and would be appinting himself to fill the open slot.

ABORTION RADICALS MEDDLE IN LAWRENCE'S MAYORAL RACE

Radical pro-abortion group "Emily's List" made a startling endorsement in the Lawrence Mayor's race last month when they issued a press release saying that aare endorsing Vilma Dominguez-Martinez for Mayor of Lawrence Emily's List supports abortion on demand up until birth and gives money to candidates who agree with their platform.

***** COMMUNITY EVENTS *****

MERRIMACK VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EVENTS

Annual Women in Business Luncheon at Maria's Restaurant! Wednesday, August 18th, Noon – 1:15PM at Maria's Restaurant, 81 Essex St, Haverhill. Includes exclusive hot lunch! Guest Speaker: Tricia Sabulis, Vice President of A.P. Michaud Insurance Agency, Inc. Thank you to our Title Sponsor: The Savings Bank and our Associate Sponsor: Merrimack Valley Chamber Means Business Program $25 – Members and $35 – Future Members

BUSINESS NETWORKING MIXER at Carbone's Kitchen! Tuesday, August 24th, 4 - 6PM at Carbone's Kitchen, 151 South Main St. Haverhill

CONNECT - EXCHANGE - PROMOTE - You will connect with other professionals 1-1, gain visibility in the Merrimack Valley and discuss your products/services with others.

Attend this MVCC In Person Mixer and enjoy:• Business Connections and Networking • Complimentary Appetizers/Cash Bar • Business Card Drawing for Door Prizes. Pre-register and bring a potential new member for FREE! When they join, you get a Free $50 restaurant card courtesy of the MVCC. Sponsored by: Silverio Insurance Agency. $10 – Members and $20 – Future Members Register: merrimackvalleychamber.com or call 978-686-0900. Guests will be asked to follow restaurant's COVID19 guidelines. Connect with us on social media! Facebook, Instagram, YouTube & LinkedIn - @MerrimackValleyChamber or Twitter - @MVChamber. Visit our website to learn more: www.merrimackvalleychamber.com

MVCC NETWORKING AT NOON LUNCHEON at Salvatore's Restaurant!

Tuesday, August 31st. Noon – 1:15PM

354 Merrimack St, in Lawrence. Members: $22, Future Members: $32. Thank you to our Sponsor to date: A.P. Michaud Insurance Agency, Inc. Sponsorships are available – call Michael Bevilacqua at 978-686-0900 or email: Michael.bevilacqua@merrimackvalleychmaber.com

MVCC ANNUAL HR UPDATE WITH SCHWARTZ HANNUM PC!

Thursday, September 2nd Noon – 1:15PM, at 34 Park Restaurant, Andover.

Jacqueline M. Fogg, Attorney and Amanda Silveira, Attorney, discussing

-Implementation of new Massachusetts leave laws -Continued impact of COVID-19 on the workplace, including employee safety and vaccinations -Employer obligations related to the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

NOTEBOOK: NEXT PAGE

WINSTON SAYS!

I'm voting for Rich Russell for City Council in Lawrence

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NOTEBOOK: FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

- Important developments in federal and state employment and labor laws. (Includes Luncheon) Sponsored by SCHWARTZ HANNUM PC

$22 – Members and $32 – Future Members.

NECC'S NEW ACCELERATED ONLINE DEGREE PROGRAMSFOR WORKING ADULTS

This fall, Northern Essex Community College will offer three new fully online accelerated associate degree programs in Business Transfer, Criminal Justice, and General Studies: Health Specialization, designed especially for working students.

Typically, Northern Essex courses run a full semester or 15-weeks. These programs will feature 7 and 8-week accelerated courses. In one semester, students can take four courses; two the first part of the semester and two the second part. By taking four courses each semester, along with courses during the summer and winter intersession, students can graduate in two years. The cost to earn one of these online associate degrees is approximately $9,000 and whenever possible professors are using open educational resources, which are free to students, rather than expensive textbooks. One third of Northern Essex students are working full time while attending college.

The fall 2021 semester begins Sept. 8th. For more information on these new accelerated online associate degree programs, contact Ari Chicklis, achicklis@necc.mass.edu

COMMUNITY CENTER TRUST

METHUEN SONS OF ITALY LODGE # 902 SAVE THE DATE – 9/11/2021

On September 11th at the Methuen Lodge located at 459 Merrimack Street in commemorating the 700th Anniversary of the death of DANTE ALIGHIERI. We will hold a tree planting and unveil a plaque at 11:45AM to commemorate this occasion. In addition to the morning ceremony the Methuen Lodge Community Center Trust will be hosting a bocce tournament beginning at 8:30AM. Dante is known as the Father of the Italian Language and also the Cornerstone of Literature in the Western civilization.

The Sons of Italy Community Center Trust is offering banner sponsorship (3 x 5) feet to be displayed inside our bocce portion of the building for one year at a cost of $300.00. Consider:

1) Your Business Logo
2) Your Family Name
3) In Memory of a loved one

For additional information please contact:

Pio Frittitta @ 978-502-8469, John Bonanno @ 978-836-7900 or Armand Buonanno @ 978-314-5097.

Northeast Massachusetts Youth Orchestras, Inc.

Join NMYO! Audition for the 2021-2022 Concert Season

IPSWICH, MA –Northeast Massachusetts Youth Orchestras (NMYO) is back for in-person rehearsals and concerts! Now accepting video auditions, NMYO is looking for young musicians to join its ensembles for the 2021-2022 Academic Season.

Are you looking for a great place to play your instrument, perform in concert, and socialize with other young players who enjoy playing as much as you? Then NMYO is the place for you!

String, Woodwind, Brass, and Percussion students, at all levels of playing, are invited to audition. Musicians new to NMYO, and returning students who wish to move to a different ensemble, are required to submit a video consisting of two scales and a piece of your choosing. Returning musicians who wish to remain in their current NMYO ensemble simply need to register. All of the information needed to submit your video audition or to register are found on NMYO's website at nmyo.org. Auditions are accepted throughout the summer on a rolling basis until all seats are filled.

NMYO offers seven ensembles including two beginning string ensembles - Prelude and Overture; two full orchestras - Intermezzo and Symphony; a Wind Ensemble for intermediate and advanced winds, brass, and percussion; and two levels of Flute Choirs. Small chamber music ensembles are also offered as part of the Symphony program.

NMYO ensembles perform two major concerts and several smaller concerts annually. Weekly rehearsals take place in Topsfield/Boxford conveniently located near Route 1 and just off Interstate 95.

Get more information, view audition

NOTEBOOK: PAGE 18

Previously-Vocal Politicos Make Molehill Over Mountain

Brian Genest
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

The sound of silence is stunning. And very telling. From Swampscott and Shrewsbury to Beacon Hill and beyond, some previously-vocal politicos are suddenly biting their lips.

Not one establishment Republican has a word to say about Tom Mountain, the former MassGOP vice chair who stepped down from the party's executive committee last month. Not one has commented on Turtleboy's multi-part series or live YouTube coverage of Mountain's alleged online escapades. Not one has released a statement condemning Mountain. Not one has written a letter to the Boston Globe or done a television interview with Alison King. Not one is demanding Mountain's resignation from the Massachusetts Republican State Committee.

As you may recall, it was an entirely different story recently when a state committeewoman made private comments that were leaked to the media about a gay congressional candidate adopting children with his husband. In that case, there were demands for the state committee member to resign. There were demands for MassGOP Chairman Jim Lyons to make her resign. There were demands for Lyons to resign. This time, there were crickets.

What conservatives are dealing with here in Massachusetts is a very special type of establishment Republican, most recognizable by its Latin name: Rhinoceros Hypocritae. If it wasn't for double standards, some of these alleged Republicans would have no standards at all.

How severe is the hypocrisy?

* Last time, Gov. Charlie Baker called for the state committeewoman to resign. This time, his proxy on the executive committee, State Committeewoman Angela Davis of Foxborough, didn't even bother to show up for the meeting last month to discuss the allegations against Mountain. And Baker has said nothing.

* Last time, State Committeewoman Janet Leombruno of Framingham was one of the loudest voices calling for Lyons to resign. This time, guess who else didn't show up for the executive committee meeting about Mountain? You guessed it: Leombruno, Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito's proxy. Her absence speaks volumes.

* Last time, House Minority Leader Brad Jones was one of the 29 elected Republicans who signed a letter saying Lyons should resign if he refused to demand the state committeewoman's resignation. This time, Jones' proxy, State Committeeman Matthew Sisk of Braintree, was another no show at the executive committee meeting.

Also, this time, none of the 29 have signed a letter demanding Mountain's resignation from the state committee. Be sure to ask Jones and these other state representatives about their hypocrisy: Peter Durant, Shawn Dooley, Lenny Mirra, Bradford Hill, Paul Frost, F. Jay Barrows, Donald Berthiaume, Angelo D'Emilia, Steven Howitt, James Kelcourse, Todd Smola, Kimberly Ferguson, Susan Gifford, Nick Boldyga, David Decoste, Sheila Harrington, Hannah Kane, Joseph McKenna, David Muradian, Mathew Muratore, Norman Orrall, Kelly Pease, Michael Soter, Alyson Sullivan, David Vieira, Timothy Whelan, Donald Wong and Steven Xiarhos.

* Last time, seven former party chairs signed a letter saying Lyons should resign or be removed by the state committee. This time, there's no calls for Mountain to resign from Jeanne Kangas, Kerry Healey, Jennifer Nassour, Brian Cresta, Peter Torkildsen, Jean Inman or Darrel Crate. Considering anyone would be hard pressed to name anything any of them did to grow the Republican Party during their tenures, perhaps they should criticize current leadership less—or not at all.

* Last, but certainly not least: Last time, these 16 self-described party donors tried to bribe state committee members, promising to raise $1 million for the MassGOP if we "reorient" party leadership: Jonathan Bush, Bill Carey, Kimberly Dacier, Christopher Egan, Jim Grossman, David Howe, John Kingston, Scott Lemay, Gregg Lisciotti, William McQuillan, Bob Pereira, Daniel Quirk, Kevin Rollins, Victor Romeiro, Ray Stata and Jessica Tocco. (Of course, these people haven't been donating to the MassGOP in the last couple years; they've been giving to the Massachusetts Majority Independent Expenditure PAC, a super PAC closely tied to Baker that donates to both Republican and Democrat candidates.) This time, they haven't offered any cash for Mountain's resignation, but who knows how much they'll offer state committee members to fill the vacant Vice Chair's seat with their preferred lackey.

One thing is certain: When it comes to establishment Republicans in Massachusetts, the righteous indignation is limited in scope, but the hypocrisy is endless.

— Brian Genest is a member of the Massachusetts Republican State Committee representing the Second Essex & Middlesex District of Andover, Dracut, Lawrence and Tewksbury. ◊

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Former Lawrence School Safety Officer Appears to be New Person of Interest in the Andy Puglisi Case

Pulls No Call, No Show at Grand Jury

By Brett Ruhmann and Dr. Justess Callahan

The New Hampshire State Police recently served a subpoena to the former Lawrence School Safety Officer to appear before a grand jury in Massachusetts. He was served at his residence in New Hampshire, but pulled a no call no show at the Grand Jury, according to Trooper Matt Murphy of the Essex County DA's Office.

Murphy went on to explain that there's no penalty in NH for not showing up at another state's Grand Jury, and that the police were able to serve him because he might also be a witness to the crime, Murphy stated that anytime someone doesn't show up to a grand jury it's troubling. It appears that this investigation is the most active it's been in years as the police continue to pursue leads.

Andy Puglisi is a ten-year-old boy who lived in the Stadium Housing Projects in Lawrence, MA, He went missing from the nearby Higgins Memorial Swimming Pool on August 21, 1976. He was never heard from again.

On July 7, 202I, I interviewed the former officer's 77-year-old brother. My first question was: Do you think your brother is capable of killing? He replied "Absolutely" (without hesitation). As I asked him if he'd bet his life that his brother killed, he cut me off and stated he gave me my answer. He also stated his brother is a "pedophile and that's why he is no longer a police officer".

This is consistent with what Melanie Perkins McLaughlin wrote in her Letter to the Editor of The Valley Patriot in August of 2020. She stated "the Lawrence school safety officer was subsequently let go from the force as the result of being found by North Andover police in a compromising position with another juvenile from the Stadium projects. He has not been named a suspect in Andy's disappearance although his behavior is certainly questionable/". Melanie won an Emmy for her HBO documentary, Have You Seen Andy.

Coincidently, the boy was from the same housing projects as Andy. This officer was never questioned about the disappearance of Andy Puglisi. I asked a detective who was on this case why they never looked at this officer, and he stated "we started to look at this cop, but just blew it off". There were just too many cases at that time, Also, there was also a woman that lived in the Stadium Projects who claimed she heard this former officer tell Andy to get into the cruiser around 8pm on the night Andy went missing. This woman is now deceased. She never backed off this claim. It's important to note that most of the evidence in this case is missing.

The brother goes on to state, with conviction, his brother is the "most cold-blooded person he's ever known". He states he "almost killed his brother twice". He then states "they probably threw the body in the river (not referring to himself)". He then states "they threw a lot of bodies in the river back then", and he goes on to say "they fished in the Merrimack River for German Carp". It was strange he went form throwing bodies in the river to fishing. This is just a guess, but it appears to be his way of saying the bodies were thrown into the Merrimack River.

The former Officer's brother acted as if he never heard of Andy Puglisi. He was living in Lawrence at the time and working in Andover. I found it concerning he didn't mention that his son was 8 when Andy went missing and he went to the same pool as Andy. His son (Former Officer's nephew) shared this information with me via Messenger. Even though this person of interest claims to not know Andy, he gave advice on what the investigation needs to do to solve the case. In order to protect an ongoing investigation, these details are not being released yet.

He asked me how important this story was to me. I stated very important. He did say that all the questions I came there with, he's answered. He also provided his brother's address, former addresses, former employers, relatives, and former wives. He also provided the names of 3 other people he thought I should look at. Over the years this officer has lived in Somerville, MA., Methuen, MA, Salem, NH, Derry, NH, Londonderry, NH, Hooksett, NH, and possibly others.

This person of interest has worked as a Police Officer, Corrections Officer, and an in-home councilor in which he counseled severely mentally ill adults who had children in the home. He worked there from 1999-2010. Attempts to contact his former wife have been unsuccessful.

On July 19, 2021, I attempted to interview the former officer at his residence, I was shocked that he moved out right after my interview with his brother. I asked Trooper Murphy if he had any questions for him and he said, "yes, ask him why he blew off the grand jury". An employee of the property confirmed the move. First, he states the state moved him. Then he said the former officer's son moved him. I was startled as this is the son that was telling me on Messenger that he hardly knew his father. The property employee went on to say this former officer has a little trouble hearing, but is very coherent which is consistent with what the former officer's son told me on Messenger.

This person of interest had the means, motive, and opportunity. He's the only one we know with 100% certainly was in that area. He also had the most to lose as he and his wife were 3 weeks away from having a baby. Let's not forget the 4-year-old who was with Andy, Ray Clarke, got away. He walked back to the top of the hill and saw 3 men holding Andy to a rock. As soon as Ray got away, the perpetrators should have taken off. They were not worried that Ray got away. They had no fear he was going to go get an adult or have the police called. Even after 2 boys were raped at the same pool a year earlier, they had no fear of an increased police presence or parents being more vigilant.

Let's not forget there was more than one person involved. Wayne Chapman still remains a person of interest. We're not convinced Chapman had anything to do with Andy. A former detective on the case said the Captain needed a name to feed to the media and he chose Chapman. He also stated that Chapman had nothing to do with Andy.

The Massachusetts State Police, Lawrence Police, and Revere Police did question Chapman on February 10, 2021 in Connecticut. Dr. Fred Berlin, a world renown expert on pedophiles and sexual behavior, who testified at the Jeffrey Dahmer trial as a government witness, said he was very familiar with Chapman. He said that "in all of Chapman's crimes he always operated alone, and there's no evidence to suggest he ever broke his normal pattern of behavior". A source close to the investigation confirmed the Police received no new information from Chapman.

Dr. Justess Jacobson, who has her Doctorate in Forensic Psychology, was instrumental in helping write and edit this article. She has written this initial profile of Andy's possible killer. This is the first profile ever done on this case. Dr. Jacobson went on to say: "I do NOT think, even in the slightest, this was human trafficking. I do believe, based on the crime, and the circumstantial

PUGLISI: PAGE 20

PEARLSTEIN: FROM 2

communication. The report recommends in part:

• That documented chains of command be established within the Homes and that annual routine training be provided along with written plans developed and practiced for normal and emergency operations. This training would be reviewed by the executive director of the Office of Veterans' Homes and Housing and the proposed secretary of veterans affairs.

• That the "secretary" of veterans' services be a secretary of veterans affairs (not a commissioner) with a seat in the Governor's Cabinet.

• That the chain of command at both Soldiers' Homes be from the superintendent to the executive director of veterans' homes and housing to the proposed secretary of veterans affairs to the governor.

3. Longstanding staffing deficiencies at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home and the vacancy of key leadership positions contributed substantially to the tragedy.

It is difficult to overestimate the extent to which insufficient staffing, the decision not to fill key leadership positions as required by law, labor relation friction, floating staff, mandatory overtime, and other staffing-related problems contributed to this tragedy.

The committee concluded after reviewing the Moakley Report, an audit by the state auditor's office, and extensive oral testimony provided by the nurses' union and others that by 2016, the reputation of the facility had clearly changed. Mandatory overtime, the use of external hiring services, and staff turnover were all indicators that there was trouble at the Soldiers' Home. The failure of Baker administration officials, from 2016-2020, to dig deeper into the union's concerns of working conditions, the erratic staffing patterns, and Walsh's anger management issues allowed the facility's tailspin to continue unabated. An intervention was warranted, but none came.

Some recommendations that the committee puts forth include:

• Staffing the Soldiers' Homes to achieve, at a minimum, the gold standard certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

• Creating a full-time ombudsman position with direct access to the executive director of veterans' homes and housing.

• Filling critical leadership within the administration within required timeframes.

• Requiring an infection control specialist on staff.

4. A lack of structures for coordination between the two Soldiers' Homes contributed to the tragedy.

The committee found substantial differences in policies and procedures at the Soldiers' Homes in Chelsea and Holyoke that led to different outcomes in managing the COVID-19 pandemic.

The committee makes broad recommendations to standardize many policies pertaining to both Soldiers' Homes, to include creating a centralized state board of directors that will provide oversight and make policy recommendations to the proposed secretary of veterans affairs on all matters pertaining to the homes and ensure that all veterans in the Commonwealth have access to the care provided at the homes. The composition of the board will reflect the composition of veterans throughout the Commonwealth.

Legislation to enact these recommendations will be forthcoming. Our veterans and their families deserve nothing less.

State Representative Linda Dean Campbell and State Senator Michael Rush are veterans currently serving as the chairs of the Special Joint Oversight Committee on the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke COVID-19 Outbreak. ◊

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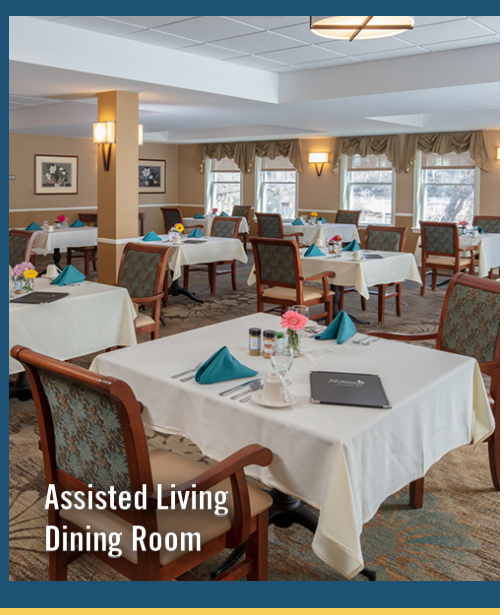
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Lawrence's Own Bylli Crayone: The Undisputed King of Dance

There is a lot of talent within the Merrimack Valley, but when it comes to 'Dance' music, Bylli Crayone holds the crown as the King of Dance.

Whether it be Freestyle, Club, Trance or Pop Music, Bylli has done it all. He's even got a Merengue song out there. Over the past few decades Bylli has made a name for himself within the dance music community. Fans from all over the world support his music. From the Freestyle Community to the Gay Community and everyone else in between. Dance Music has no limits. It has a wide range audience and has an appeal that many can adapt to. The new album release 'TOYFRIEND" is a Milestone album celebrating his 30 years in music as an independent artist. The album is a collection of songs that have been recorded over the years. Compiled exclusively for this album release. Songs include the 1991 release of 'Girl Hang It Up!' which was the song that started it all. The album also includes collaborations with 80s Pop Legends BOY GEORGE and TIFFANY. The Digital & CD release both have 12 tracks while the limited-edition Japanese vinyl pressing only has 8.

The Japanese vinyl release is a limited-edition orange colored vinyl pressing. It also includes a limited-edition foldout poster inside the LP. But the most exciting part about this vinyl release is the exclusive Funko Pop that is only available through a direct link found by scanning the QR Code on the back of the album jacket. These Funko Pops are limited to 20 and are Exclusive to this vinyl album release in Japan. The Vinyl and CD can both be purchased online at CrayoneMusic.com Support your local artists.

For more on Bylli Crayone, Visit BylliCrayone.com

#BylliCrayone #Toyfriend #DanceMusic ◊

Should I Work Out or Just Diet?

Rick Bellanti
VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

I received a great question this week: Rick, I go to the gym five times a week, I do plenty of cardio, and work out all the time and yet I can't seem to lose weight, what gives? First, you have to take a look at what you're eating; it really is the most important part of any health and wellness program and there are a couple of quotes that come to mind: "You cannot out train your diet" and also "Abs are made in the kitchen". Food consumption has a larger impact on your wellness goals, more than working out does, if you are trying to lose weight. Think of it as the new 80/20 program.

When you are trying to get healthy and lose weight, what you do in the kitchen with your meals has 80% influence over your weight loss success and the other 20% would be your workout routine. For example: You want flat abs? Everyone has abdominal muscles (abs), they are just covered by a layer of fat in most people. What you need to do is get your body fat percentage down low enough to reveal them and it's not by doing hundreds of sit-ups anymore, it's by getting the proper nutrition in your system. Your abs are really made in the kitchen not in the gym.

Keep a daily log as a Food Diary and a Physical Activity Diary. While exercise will help with weight loss, most people will tend to overestimate the amount of calories they burned while working out and then adjust for what they think they burned off exercising and then eat more than they should in return. Also, some people will underestimate what they are taking in for calories when eating and then overeat throughout the day. Keeping a log of what you're taking in for calories each day will help you stay on track. You can always go back and look at your records if you are not seeing progress and find out what needs to be adjusted.

Everybody is unique and may have different caloric needs and a healthy lifestyle requires balance, in the foods you eat, and in the amount of physical activity or exercise you include in your daily routine. While counting calories is not necessary, it may help you in the beginning to gain an awareness of your eating habits as you strive to achieve the balance. The ultimate test of the balance is whether or not you are losing weight and making progress.

Also, with the more weight you lose it actually takes less calories to move your body, so a loss of weight will lead to less energy requirement, so bump up those healthy calories and eat more. Sounds crazy right? If you are working out that means you are burning more calories. If your body does not have enough calories it will go into a starvation mode and hold onto your fat storage making it harder to see the scale move down.

For better results it's always best to incorporate both, healthy eating and working out into your wellness routine. I didn't start working out until I was into my sixth month of my weight loss and wellness journey and I started out by just walking. It wasn't until my seventh month that I started to workout out and build lean muscle.

Building lean muscle in your body also helps burn fat and is highly recommended when you start to get near your goal weight and to help push you through any plateaus you might have. Remember, whichever you choose, stay hydrated with lots of water, start a Food Diary and a Physical Activity Diary, even if it's a short walk for thirty minutes daily.

Rick Bellanti is a wellness columnist and is on a journey himself to lose 240lbs, and has lost 140lbs since the start of 2015. If you have any questions or comments, please post them to his Getting Healthy with Rick Bellanti Facebook page and once a month he will address a few of the topics here ◊

HERO: FROM PAGE 1

have twelve grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. Both Bob and Jenny's faces lit up with they told me about attending auto races at the Dracut Speedway, often sneaking Bob's brother Wendell in, hiding him in the trunk of the car. Sadly, the Dracut Speedway closed in 1955.

Family friend, State Rep Colleen Garry-D, Dracut/Tyngsboro, recalled seeing the couple walking around Dracut, always "hand and hand". At their 75th Anniversary Party, Bob and Jenny told Representative Garry, they wake every morning to Bob singing, usually "You are my Sunshine" to Jenny. Still very much in love after 75 years.

I've met dozens of Veterans and their spouses these past four years, while working for the Valley Patriot, but the bond between these two, Bob and Jenny Iby, is special, and represents well, America's Greatest Generation!

The Dracut American Legion asks all World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War Veterans, to call (603) 518-5368 and sign up for an Honor Flight to the Memorials in Washington DC! Veterans of all eras are asked to go the American Legion's Web site www.legion.org, and join the American Legion, preserving our Veteran's Benefits for future generations.

John Cuddy served in the US Navy's Construction Battalions (also known as the Seabees) after retiring from the

Navy; he earned a bachelor's in history and a master's in economics from the University of Massachusetts on the Lowell Campus. He has been employed in Logistics at FedEx for the last 24 years. If you know a World War II veteran who would like their story told, please email him at John.Cuddy@Yahoo.com ◊

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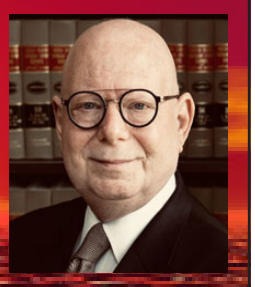

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SUE PIAZZA'S BOOK CORNER

The Etruscan Princess

© by Maria Marotti 2020
Advance Copy
On sale on Amazon for a limited time at $.99. Genre: Mystery, Fiction
Bookmarkers: 5 of 5

The fiancé of an American detective is teaching a course in film noir in Italy. Her political struggles, past and present, with the university's administration, play out against the bigger obstacles the characters face.

Valencia's annoying, rude roommate, given to her by the university, goes missing. As Valencia picks up her fiancé, Nick Fusco, at the airport they witness Caterina being shoved, by gunpoint, into a car. Caterina's estranged father is very wealthy and though they haven't spoken in twelve years, she is held for ransom.

One of the many issues facing the father/daughter is that there has been a change in who is holding her. The kidnapper's demands have also changed - several times. The final demand is something Caterina's father is desperate to keep. It is his "Etruscan Princess", an artifact he has broken the law to acquire. "Life without her is meaningless…" he remarks.

Adding to the mystery and tension Ms. Marotti tosses in an undercover journalist, tomb robbers, and the local "camorra" (mafia).

Though all these characters may seem convoluted, this fast-paced mystery actually incorporates all these pieces well and creates a believable story. There is great tension which keeps the reader wanting more. It took me only two sittings to read this book. I could not put it down!

The author also gives us a nice glimpse into various city and surrounding countryside sights. No writing taking place in Italy would neglect the gastronomical delicacies and this author does not disappoint on this respect either. She gives her novel a richness and a connection with the reader that many books lack. Places are described in such detail I feel like I'm back there again. Her descriptions of foods make me recall the rich and varied tastes of the different regions. My taste buds long to savor the recollected experiences.

The author includes a FREE copy of her short story "The Crying Game" her bonus. An additional pleasure I cannot wait to partake of.

I would definitely recommend reading this book. Just make sure that you have time to devote to it. You will not want to put it down.

Susan Piazza, a Navy veteran, is an author, columnist, and blogger. Her first book, the romantic historical fiction "A Bird Call That Isn't," can be found on Amazon at A Bird Call That Isn't. For a FREE copy of the first chapter in Book One of her American Indian series go to susanpiazzaauthor.com and email her. She'd love to hear from you! ◊

WEATHER 101 with AL KAPRIELIAN

First Full Month of Summer

Welcome to August and the last full month of the summer season. During August the days continue to get shorter and the nights longer. During the first week of August sunsets will occur before 8PM. During the month we will lose about 75 minutes of daylight. Daily high maximum temperatures decrease as we go through the month due to less daylight and also the sun's angle is not as high. The sun's rays are becoming less direct compared to June and July.

However, the ocean temperatures will be warmer in August which continues into September. During August into September with warmer ocean temperatures we should start to see the tropics become more active in terms of hurricane formation. Peak season for hurricanes is mid-August to mid-September.

Hurricanes can still occur after peak season with some hurricanes possible even into October.

Recapping July it did not live up to its reputation as being the hottest month of the year. It was far from being as hot as June was, which had two heat waves. A heat wave is defined as three or more consecutive days of 90 degrees or higher.

During July we saw many days with high temperatures running cooler than normal (below average). Many days in July featured measurable rainfall. Boston had just over 15 days with measurable rainfall. For the month of July Boston (report taken at Logan Airport) got 10.07 inches of rain which was about 6.80 inches above normal.

For Boston this 10.07 inches of rain ranked #2 in terms of most rainfall in the month of July. #1 was 11.69 inches set back in 1921. Worcester got over 13 inches of rain for the month of July. This was the most rain ever for Worcester in July which now ranks #1. The #2 ranking for Worcester was 11.41 inches set in 1938. For July Boston was 1.4 degrees below normal.

Many other areas in New England saw below normal temperatures for July. The reason for the cool and wet July was an unusually southern track of the jet stream. As a result, this caused more troughing (dipping in the jet stream) which enabled fronts and upper-level disturbances to move through the region. The Bermuda High pressure was more suppressed to the south and east due to the jet stream pattern. The fronts and upper-level disturbances contained a lot of moisture producing days with heavy downpours. These heavy downpours caused major flooding issues over interior southern New England especially central and western Massachusetts and also parts of interior New Hampshire. Also, with the heavy downpours, strong damaging wind gusts occurred along with hail during some days in July.

An example of a day was on July 27th when many areas in western Massachusetts Worcester county and parts of metro west had strong damaging winds with many trees and power lines down resulting in numerous power outages.

On July 27th the strong damaging winds caused a tree to fall on a car in Hatfield which is in Hampshire County in Massachusetts. Also, the heavy rain which caused major flooding washed out some roadways. While we saw a lot of rain in July just the opposite occurred over the western United States. Hot temperatures and a lack of rain caused numerous wildfires which extended north into western Canada. The smoke from the Wildfires moved all the way across the country and was brought by the jet stream into New England. The smoke was thickest on Monday July 26th when an Air Quality Alert was issued for most of New England. The smoke caused the visibility to be much lower than it normally would be. The smoke was most dangerous to elderly, small children, and people with heart and respiratory problems.

Even though July was a very wet month this cannot be said about Cape Cod and the Islands. These areas saw much less rain than most other areas in New England. Now with July over we now turn to August. Will the wet and cool pattern we had in July continue into August?

Will the Bermuda High pressure strengthen and build back closer to the east coast giving us a hotter August? Stay tuned to next month's article for the answer!! In the meantime, enjoy the rest of the summer season. Remember when at the beach if the ocean has rip currents listen to the lifeguards and also never swim alone. Be safe and enjoy!! ◊

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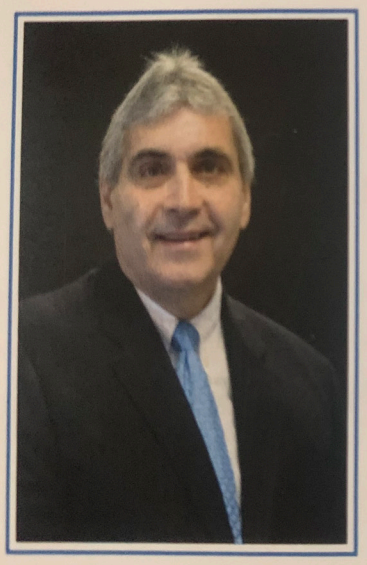
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Summer Activities & Seacoast Happenings

LAWRENCE

98th Annual Feast of the Three Saints -Alfio, Filadelfo and Cirino, 20 Common St, in Lawrence. Procession – Italian Food – Raffle – Entertainment – Family Fun. Saturday, September 4th the Feast opens at noon. City Hall 3PM. Opening procession to Corpus Christi Parish at Holy Rosary Church. Main Stage/Bandstand 3:15PM. Acting Out - Performing Peace Love and Music

Main Stage/Bandstand 6:00PM

Stephen Savio & SeaBreeze Band

Torchlight Procession 7:30 PM

Corner of Common and Newbury Streets honoring our Saints and ending with fireworks & Cantata played by the St. Alfio Band. Main Stage 9PM - Something Else. Sunday, September 5th, - Feast opens at noon.

10AM Mass in honor of the Three Saints - Corpus Christi Parish at Holy Rosary Church. Main Stage 2PM - Acting Out - Performing Peace Love and Music. St. Alfio Society Hall Chapel 3PM. Procession of the Statues of the Three Saints through the Feast neighborhood

Main Stage 4PM - Rico Barr and the Jumpin' Jive Review

Society Building 7PM - "Moment of Glory" with Benediction and the Cantata played by the St. Alfio Band amidst fireworks and shower of confetti

Main Stage/Bandstand 8:30PM - TheB Street Bombers

40TH ANNUAL GLOUCESTER WATERFRONT FESTIVAL:

https://castleberryfairs.com/40th-annual-gloucester-waterfront-arts-and-craft-festival/

Stage Fort Park, Hough Avenue, Gloucester, August 21 & 22. Saturday 9am - 6pm ~ Sunday 9am - 5pm. Free Admission, Rain or Shine and Friendly Pets on a leash are welcome.

(Note: $Fee to park at beach parking). Over 150 Juried Artisans, Craftspeople, Food Vendors, Authors and Musicians from throughout the United States will display and sell their American made work.

HAMPTON BEACH, NH

https://hamptonbeach.org/events/seashell-stage-nightly-shows/

Hampton Beach offers nightly entertainment during the summer. Bring your dancing shoes if you would like to dance in front of the stage.

All shows are subject to change at this time due to COVID. All shows are also weather dependent

2021 SHOWS Admission ion free!

** All shows are held from 7-8 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. **

AUGUST 2021

Tuesday, August 10: Leaving Eden – Rock and Roll. Wednesday, August 11: Mark 209.

Thursday, August 12: Angela West & Showdown – Country

Friday, August 13: 4-Now – Classics to Today Rock

Saturday, August 14: Brass Attack of Springfield

Sunday, August 15: Crossroads

Monday, August 16: The CAB

Tuesday, August 17: Little Big Shots

Wednesday, August 18: The Continentals – Rock and Roll

Thursday, August 19: The Goat Ropers

Friday, August 20: The Continentals (Parade) 11 a.m. – Rock and Roll

Friday, August 20: Mark 209

Saturday, August 21: Rico Barr Jumping Jive Review

Sunday, August 22: Tru Diamond featuring Michael Anthony

Monday, August 23: Apathetics

Tuesday, August 24: The Visitors Band

Wed., August 25: B-Street Bombers

Thursday, August 26: No Shoes Nation

Friday, August 27: Junior Talent Competition

Sat. August 28: Senior Talent Competition

Sunday, Aug. 29: FINALS: Talent Competition 2021

Monday, Aug. 30: All Summer Long

Tuesday, Aug. 31: Chippy & the Ya Ya's

SEPTEMBER 2021

Wednesday, September 1: New Legacy Swing Band – Swing

Thursday, September 2: Angela West & Showdown – Country

Friday, September 3: Good Stuff Band

Saturday, September 4: CIRQUE DU HAMPTON BEACH, 7 PM

Sunday, September 5: The Continentals

Monday, September 6: The Reminisants

Hampton Beach Movie Night Mondays on the Beach:

Movies are shown on the large screen next to the playground. All movies are family-friendly and start at dark/dusk. Please bring a blanket or chair to sit on and refreshments or snacks! Don't forget the kids! Admission is free. Movies start at dusk. Movie times listed below are only approximate. Weather permitting. Rain Date: Tuesday

Aug 16 – Moana – 7:43 p.m.

Aug 23 – Tom & Jerry- 7:32 p.m.

Aug 30 – TBA – 7:20 p.m.

FIREWORKS 2021

August 11, 18, 25

Normally held weekly every Wednesday during the summer, at the beach, at the top of B and C Streets at 9:30 p.m. All fireworks shoots are weather dependent, with a rain date on the following Friday.

For updates or cancellations: www.facebook.com/HamptonNHBeach

32nd Annual HAMPTON BEACH SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

September 10-12 , Friday, 1-9pm

Saturday, 10am – 9pm

Sunday, 9am – 6pm

Local restaurats, arts & crafts booths, two stages for live entertainment, corn hole tournament, Lobster Roll Eating Contest, and fireworks take over Ocean Blvd. (closed to traffic) for the weekend. Enjoy seafood delicacies, the only bar on the beach, cooking demonstrations in the Culinary Tent, and many more activities.

COME CELEBRATE THE LAST BLAST OF SUMMER!!

Seafood Festival Admission Cost:

Admission donation for Friday, Saturday, Sunday is $10 per person. *A portion of Admission Proceeds go to support the charities of the Knights of Columbus. Children under 12 are free of charge. Pets are not allowed.

SALISBURY BEACH, MA

The Oceanfront Stage

Fridays at 7:15 PM: DJ Beach Party

Wednesdays 6:45 PM – 9 PM: Christian Concert Series

SATURDAY NIGHT CONCERTS at 7:30PM:

Sat, Aug 14 – Scott Brown and the Diplomats

Sat, Aug 21 - All Summer Long – Musical Tribute to the Beach Boys

Sat, Aug 28 -The B Street Bombers

Sat, Sep 4 - No Shoes Nation

https://mysalisburybeach.com/bandsonthebeach/

Notebook Continued from 9

requirements and video guidelines, and submit your audition today at nmyo.org/auditions. Or email auditions@nmyo.org with your questions.

MASS LOTTERY'S NORTH SHORE REGIONAL OFFICE IS MOVING TO LAWRENCE

The Massachusetts State Lottery's North Shore regional office is moving from 11 Cummings Park in Woburn to Stadium Plaza, 160 Winthrop Avenue in Lawrence. The final day of business at the existing location is Friday, July 16, when the office will be closing at 12 p.m. The new prize claim and retail center at Stadium Plaza in Lawrence will open Monday, July 19 at 8:45 a.m.

"The Lottery is excited to be joining the greater Lawrence business community," said State Treasurer Deborah B. Goldberg, Chair of the Massachusetts State Lottery Commission. "This new retail space will allow us to offer an even more enhanced customer experience, and we are delighted to be doing so in such a growing and invigorated city."

"We appreciate the support that local officials and business leaders in Lawrence have expressed in welcoming us to their community," said Michael Sweeney, Executive Director of the

Massachusetts State Lottery. "The Stadium Plaza location is easily accessible from several major roadways and offers plenty of parking for our customers."

All prizes up to and including $100,000 can be claimed at the North Shore location. All prizes

over $100,000 must be claimed at the Lottery's headquarters at 150 Mount Vernon Street in Dorchester.

Regular business hours for all Lottery claim centers are Monday through Friday, 8:45 a.m. to 4:30pm. (excluding holidays).

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BENEATH THE SURFACE

What and Why?

Paul Murano
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Babies illustrate for us what it means to be fundamentally human. Anthropologists tell us that the first word a baby speaks, 'mama', is based on the mother representing food. It's the sound they make with their mouth when wanting milk. It's related to the sound we still make as adults when we approve of something we taste – 'Mmmm.'

After a baby's survival instincts are met, and they begin to think past their basic needs, things begin to get fascinating. After the words Mama and Dada, and perhaps 'No!', the first words that come out of a human being's mouth are usually 'What's this?' and 'Why?' Think about that. What and why. Meaning and purpose. Essence and end. No other animal wants to know what or why about anything. In fact, after physical needs are met for the sake of survival for the individual and the species, there's not much thinking at all in animals, let alone contemplation of unchanging truth.

Rather, instinct reigns. These rely solely on physical impulses, triggered from perception stimulating the brain, to nervous system movement, to final action. But there's another movement within man, a deeper hunger and yearning. This is the hunger for understanding, meaning and purpose, only experienced in persons, i.e. creatures that don't live simply on instinct.

A chimpanzee, for example, can grasp a rock in his hand because he has a physical component (hand) that can grasp a physical object (rock). But a human can grasp not just a rock, but the concept of a rock, as well as other concepts like justice, love, truth, or infinity. This is because concepts are immaterial objects, and only humans have an immaterial component in their being (spiritual soul) that can grasp immaterial objects like concepts, thoughts, and ideas.

The desire to understand and know truth is uniquely human among all earth's creatures. But that's not where the mystery ends. The human soul also possesses free will to choose the good over and above one's instinctual animal desires.

How many animals seek justice or even know what it is? Yet, a toddler who has never been told what fairness or justice is knows it intuitively. A Child's first articulations of morality, without ever being taught, are expressed in the ever-popular phrase of a child: "That's not fair!" Yet, how does a small child know what fairness is?

This basic sense of justice is inherent in the human being. Justice is fundamental to morality – giving someone else their due. Mercy and compassion are meaningless without first knowing the concept justice.

These truths point to humans being not simply walking talking animals, but creatures able to transcend the physical dimension of life to seek, understand and choose the transcendent true and good. This spiritual dimension is evident in man's creativity, found in art, science, music, philosophy, and any creativity at all. Creativity is one major way man images the Creator.

Two other major things detectable in small children an aptitude for symbolic language and a religious sense. Toddlers need not take four years of college English to learn the language. It comes naturally and easily. And every child is born open to God. They are not distracted, as adults are, with the distractions of the world.

The fact that babies and toddlers have an inherent thirst for truth and a basic knowledge of morality should make us take notice of how special we are as a species of persons. We wouldn't image God who is three eternal divine Persons unless we were persons.

It is important to reflect upon the fact that as we mature our spiritual faculties have the potential to make us be like God, or be worse than the basest of animals. That's where the gift of free will comes into play. It's a choice that has repercussions that transcend the physical world into eternity.

Paul is producer and host of Beneath the Surface video and radio podcasts,

taught college philosophy & theology, and is a staff writer/producer for St. Michael's Media. Check out his website at Paulmurano.com, and e-mail Paul at PJDM@aol.com.

PUGLISI: FROM PAGE 11

evidence we have so far, it is likely to be male, white, late 20s, early 30s, good looking, charming, abusive to partner, likely to have many partners, position of power (doctor, lawyer, police), talked to victim previously, gained trust of victim, likely killed by accident or because the victim saw/knew something they were not supposed to. The case profiles as someone who knew what they were doing, was likely not their first offense, may have been last as the kill may have scared them. This person "fit" in the neighborhood, and did not look out of place, they also likely had a prior relationship or interaction with the victim. This person is prominent in society, and generally well liked, though had domestic issues. Possible anger outbursts that make those around them uncomfortable. Had access to the case (whether a family member was an officer to the case, or they had access to the records, etc.). The offender has knowledge of the area as well as disposing of bodily evidence and a general understanding of law. Overall, this person likely had chances to work with children in an outreach program or a way to prey on vulnerable children with ease and not draw attention to themselves".

If anyone has any information pertaining to this case, please contact Brett or Justess at (207)703-9161. ◊

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TV TALK with BILL CUSHING

'Dr. Death'

Bill Cushing
VALLEY PATRIOT TV COLUMNIST

Peacock's 'Dr. Death' is a new limited series based on the hit podcast and inspired by the terrifying true story of Dr. Christopher Duntsch (Joshua Jackson), a young and charismatic star in the Texas medical community. After building a successful neurosurgery practice, things suddenly change when patients entering Dr. Duntsch's operating room for complex but routine spinal surgeries are becoming permanently disabled or dying.

Doctors Robert Henderson (Alec Baldwin) and Randall Kirby (Christian Slater), two doctors who witness the damage Duntsch has done first-hand, and have a complicated history themselves, make it their personal mission to stop him. Baldwin's Dr. Henderson is the calm voice of reason, while Slater's Dr. Kirby is more aggressive and outspoken.

Henderson and Kirby issued the first warnings about Duntsch to the hospital administrators. They were met by resistance to reprimand Duntsch in anyway. Apparently, a reaction of this sort is not uncommon in such situations—especially when the doctor in question is someone reputed to be a great star, and one they're happy to have on staff. The institutions that Duntsch worked for were more concerned with lining their pockets and protecting themselves than protecting their patients.

After getting nowhere with administrators, they bring their pleas to the District Attorney's office, and team up with a Dallas prosecutor. Together, they take matters into their own hands.

Part medical drama, part mystery, part thriller, Dr. Death is a worthy binge, but also difficult to watch. The surgery scenes are traumatizing, and Joshua Jackson finds just the right balance of darkness in his performance as Duntsch. The series jumps back and forth in time from Duntsch's college and medical school days to his fellowship with Dr. Geoffrey Skadden (Kelsey Grammer) to his disastrous time in Dallas where he maimed or murdered 33 patients.

Like Jackson, Baldwin and Slater are very well cast. Baldwin is terrific in his role, and Slater looks like he's having a blast chewing the scenery. They play a sort of strange but delightful odd couple.

In addition to the leads, 'Dr. Death' has a bunch of strong performances from supporting actors including AnnaSophia Robb as Assistant District Attorney Michelle Shughart, Meryl Streep's daughter Grace Gummer as the physician's assistant who is initially conned by Duntsch's charisma, and a heartbreaking performance by Dominic Burgess as Duntsch's best friend Jerry Summers, who is so devoted to his pal that he willingly volunteers to be a test subject for one of Duntsch's surgeries, with disastrous results.

Top notch writing and directing combine, along with the terrific acting, to make a riveting eight hours of TV. Although we are never given any true insight into what made Duntsch act this way, never getting too deep into his motivation, it doesn't detract from making this a highly binge-worthy watch.

'Dr. Death' also leaves you with the unsettling knowledge that this is a true story. That this could and probably will happen again. That it could happen to you. And isn't that the scariest part?

'Dr. Death' is available to stream on Peacock.

If you have any questions about TV, you can email me at BillsTVTalk@gmail.com. I will answer all of your questions and will feature some of the questions I receive in a future Mailbag column.

Follow me on Twitter and Instagram @BillsTVTalk and on Facebook at BillsTVTalk for daily up-to-the-minute TV news and discussion. ◊

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Your Death Has Already Been Provided!

Peter Larocque
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

God Bless you all in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ! What a strange title for a column, don't you think? Well, not really because this is one of the many paradoxes in the life of a follower of Jesus Christ! We died with him yet now are alive with Him, how can this be? This goes with an old saying that I have heard in many Christian circles, "You either are born twice and die once or live once and die twice"! Please allow me to explain. The Bible says in Romans 3:23, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," NKJV. All meaning all, we all are sinners, we were all born Spiritually DEAD. Thanks to Adam's sin, Death was introduced into the world. Romans 5:12, says it like this, "Therefore, just as through one man [Adam] sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned." NKJV. Ephesians 2:12, describes the unsaved like this, "that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world." NKJV. Without Christ, having no hope and in this world! What a trifecta, a sentence of death! It's a sentence of death because Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." NKJV. We were born into this world as sinners, alive physically, but dead spiritually!

But God has a plan that deals with this problem, the plan has a name, Jesus! There is another half to that verse in Romans 6:23 that says, "but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." God offers Eternal Life through His Son, Christ Jesus. John 3:15-16 adds, "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." NKJV. God so loved He gave us Jesus who freely laid down His life for us and paid our sin debt, a debt we could not pay by ourselves! We read in Hebrews 2:9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone." NKJV. And in Hebrews 9:28, "so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation." NKJV. Jesus is a Greater Savior than we are sinners! Jesus, by His free will, chose to die the death we deserved, paying the wage for our sin!

What's our part in all this? We simply Believe and Receive! The Bible tells us in Romans 10:13, "For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved." NKJV. And Ephesians 2:4-8 adds this, "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God," NKJV. Salvation is a gift from God by Grace. Both Grace, and Forgiveness must be Received, they cannot be achieved or earned! This means Death and Judgment are Behind the Believer!

Romans 6:3-4, 8, speaks of the death Jesus provided and how we were baptized into it, "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." 8 "Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him," NKJV. Verse 11tells us "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." NKJV. We are dead to sin but alive in Christ Jesus the Moment we Believe!!!

So, the choice is now ours to make, we can either believe and receive this Eternal Spirit Life from God through Christ Jesus or stay dead spiritually only to die again physically!

We can be born twice, Physically and Spiritually, and die to sin once or we can live physically now, and die twice, be dead spiritually now, and then physically die in the future.

The best the world can offer is a coffin, but God offered His Best, His own Son. We read in Romans 8:32, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? NKJV.

I pray you choose to believe in Jesus, making Him your Personal Lord and Savior! Let's get Born-Again and unpopulated hell and fill up Heaven with our families, friends, and co-workers. Let's share with the world This Glorious Gospel of Grace! Amen!

Love you all!!!

Peter Larocque Peterlarocque@hotmail.com ◊

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On Sunday August 1st, members of Local 1421 (Building Wreckers) gave more than 200 bags of groceries to the resoidents of Lawrence. Members of the local union spent the last two months collecting donations from businesses, friends and other members.

They said it was their goal to help those who have been harshly affected by the COVID pandemic.

A representative of the union said that they had an overwhelming response and hope to do more community outreach in Lawrence in the near future. Local 1421 Building Wreckers Union will also be participating in the Hispanic Week (Semana Hispana) festivals and will be at the parade on Sunday, August 15th in Lawrence.

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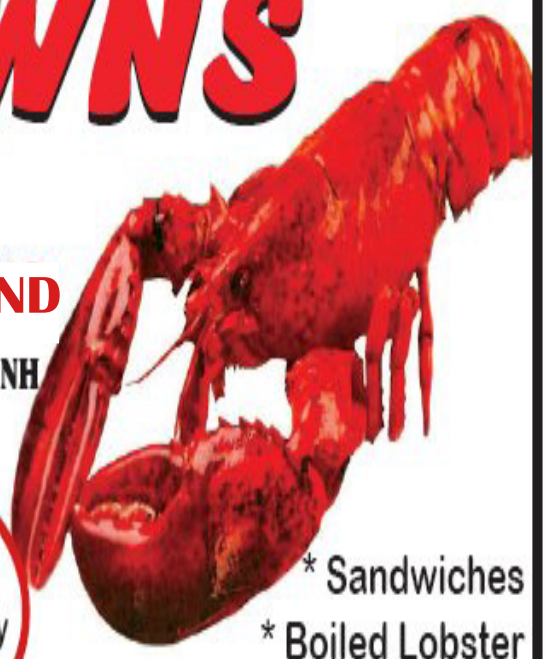

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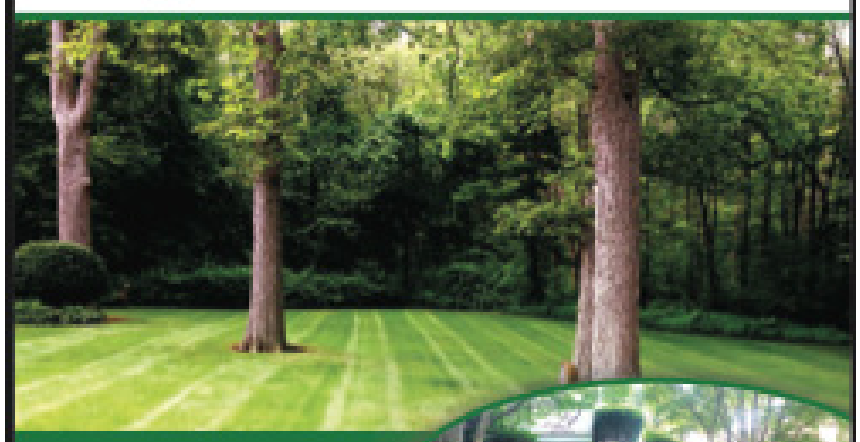

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